

OBSERVERLAND

FROM PAGE D1

2002 title, have won three of the past four events and five overall. Longtime CC coach Mike Rodriguez said he doesn't keep track of who the other contenders for the tournament are, but he realizes his team has a target on its back because of its past success.

"We know those teams would like to beat us pretty badly, because our kids left those communities to come here," he said. "It's just a backyard tournament where everyone comes from the immediate area. We're going into this tournament with the idea we're going to win it." The Shamrocks should have plenty of company among teams vying for the Observerland trophy. Livonia Stevenson has racked up a 20-4

dual meet record so far this season, and Westland John Glenn, despite losing eight seniors from last year's team, is solid up and down the lineups.

The Rockets were the runners-up to CC at last year's Observerland meet, and coach Bill Polk says his team is one of many hoping to knock off the defending champs. "A lot of kids know each other from camps in the summer, and I just really enjoy seeing teams from this area compete," Polk said.

"It seems like everyone has been improving over the past couple years, which should make for better competition all around."

The Spartans figure to be in the mix for the title as well, boasting three wrestlers with three or fewer losses this season. Coach Bob Moreau said this tournament represents a chance for athletes to get noticed among their neighborhood

OBSERVERLAND TOURNEY

What: 12th Annual Observerland Wrestling Tournament. When: Saturday, Jan. 25. Competition starts at 9 a.m., with finals starting approximately at 5:30 p.m. Where: Livonia Churchill High School (Newburgh Road between Joy and Ann Arbor Trail roads). Admission: \$5 for adults, \$3 for students 18 and under. Prices are good for the entire day.

peers. "The kids see the rankings in the paper, and if they don't like

what they see, this is their chance to prove the other coaches in the area wrong," Polk said. "It's a big source of pride for everyone involved." Moreau courted CC and Glenn as the "horses" of the tournament. His own team was hit hard by injuries at last weekend's Harland Dual Meet tournament, but still boasts of some talent.

Charlie Rabaut carries a 34-0 record into the tourney, alternating between the 119 and 125-pound weight classes. Jason Fischer (145) is off to a 31-3 start to the season, as is heavy-weight competitor Paul Bargerstock.

A darkhorse contender could be the Churchill Chargers, who are 8-4 on the season and have been competitive with just about everyone who has crossed their path this season.

The team finished ahead of John Glenn at a tournament earlier this season, and coach

Marty Altouanian said the competition should be wide open. "I don't think many of the teams have their strengths in the same area," he said. "No one will run away with it."

Churchill's contenders should include Brian Clement (125), Lev Mergan (152), Alex Murray (215) and Robert Freeman (171). Canton and Salem both finished in the top five at last year's Observerland meet. Canton coach Casey Randolph said his team is ravaged by injuries, which hurt its chances at the meet.

"I expect good things from Dan Bergsma (130) and Rob Schmetler (125)," he said. "My other guys just need to get healthy."

"This will be a good prelude to districts," Rodriguez added. "We'll see some of these same kids and some teams in districts and regionals, so we're looking forward to that."

OBSERVERLAND WINNERS

- 2002: 1. Redford Catholic Central, 2. Westland John Glenn, 3. Plymouth Salem. 2001: 1. Plymouth Canton, 2. Redford Catholic Central, 3. Livonia Churchill. 2000: 1. Redford Catholic Central, 2. Livonia Stevenson, 3. Plymouth Canton. 1999: 1. Redford Catholic Central, 2. Livonia Stevenson, 3. Garden City. 1998: 1. Plymouth Salem, 2. Redford Catholic Central, 3. Livonia Stevenson. 1997: 1. Livonia Stevenson, 2. Plymouth Canton, 3. Wayne Memorial. 1996: 1. Redford Catholic Central, 2. Livonia Stevenson, 3. Plymouth Salem. 1995: 1. Livonia Stevenson, 2. Redford Catholic Central, 3. Plymouth Salem. 1994: 1. Livonia Stevenson, 2. Redford Catholic Central, 3. Plymouth Salem. 1993: 1. Redford Catholic Central, 2. Westland John Glenn, 3. Livonia Stevenson. 1992: 1. Farmington, 2. Plymouth Canton, 3. Westland John Glenn.

RAIDERS

FROM PAGE D1

anybody is going to run the division," Negoshian said. "We're just trying to go one day, one game, at a time." This game is over and now we focus on the next one, which should be a big game (Friday at North) with Harrison, a cross-town battle.

Falcons add to streak

Farmington won its second game in a row Tuesday, taking a 50-43 victory from visiting Bloomfield Hills Andover. The Falcons are 2-1 in the OAA Division IV; the Barons are 0-3 in the division and 2-7 overall.

Joe Green's 16 points paced Farmington, which outscored Andover in the second quarter, 17-7, and created a halftime lead of 31-18 for itself.

Matt Okopyny tossed in 11 points; Giorgio Holt, Marcus Holman and Danny Preston added six points apiece.

Andover's Jason Trotter scored a game-high 22 points but was held to less than his 30-plus-points-per-game average.

Nearly half of his points (10) came in the last quarter when Andover outscored Farmington, 18-9, to make the

final tally closer. Julian Cruz clipped in 10 for the Barons. Joe Green really played well for us," Falcons coach Steve Norgrove said. "He had very good shot selection, and Danny Preston did an outstanding job shutting down Trotter."

(Andover) only had four guys who scored, and we held him to 22. Our game plan was centered around him, and we did good job of shutting him down."

The Falcons led 41-25 after three quarters and made free throws down the stretch to clinch the win. Both teams were 10-of-15 at the line.

"We are starting to understand what we need to do to win, and that's defend," Norgrove said. "When you can hold a team to few points, chances are you're going to win. We're not a very powerful offensive team but at least we're consistent."

"The kids are starting to believe in what we're doing. They're starting to feel good about themselves, and that's the first step toward success."

"Their dedication and commitment are starting to pay off in a team concept. It's less me and more we. The players are really taking to that."

Hawks fall short in OT Farmington Harrison made a big comeback Tuesday to get

the game to overtime only to lose a bucket to Royal Oak Kimball, 51-49.

The Hawks were 0-for-12 from the floor in the second quarter and 3-for-22 in the first half. They were scoreless in the second quarter and trailed at halftime, 21-8.

Harrison rallied in the second half, outscoring the Knights in the third quarter, 18-6, and over the final 16 minutes, 35-22, to make up the 13-point deficit. Kimball was two better in overtime, 8-6.

Junior Brandon Giles scored a game-high 23 points and had four steals for the Hawks, who made 12 of 25 field goals in the second half.

Senior Eric Zatkun had 10 points, including three triples, better in overtime, 8-6.

Senior Kevin Grady made the game-winning shot as time expired in overtime for the Knights, who were led by senior Mike Sheldon's 18 points and six rebounds. Junior Mike Hammond had 13 points.

Kimball is 2-1 in the OAA Division III and 4-4 overall; Harrison is 0-3 and 1-8.

WOODS

FROM PAGE D1

interested in me as a young man than just a college football player."

The Tigers apparently plan for Woods, the all-time leading rusher in Harrison history with nearly 5,000 yards, to play running back.

"When they saw how Marcus moves and makes people miss, that's the kind of back they want for their offense, and they don't have anybody like that," Woods Sr. said. "They're just tickled they had an opportunity to get Marcus."

They said they'll definitely give him an opportunity to compete. They don't have plans to redshirt him necessarily, because they don't have a back like him."

The Tigers are coached by former Toledo coach Gary Pinkel, who runs a one-back, spread offense.

Incidentally, that's the same kind of offense MSU plans to use under new coach John L. Smith. But the Spartans prefer a bigger back than the 5-foot-8, 180-pound Woods; whereas, the Tigers have a little different

style and like a smaller, quicker back.

"They spread the field and throw it out of the backfield a lot," Woods said. "I can do more than just run."

"They're talking about throwing the ball to me on screens and flare routes and putting me in the slot, too. I can do all that. They're talking my kind of football."

Despite being told by the State's regular in December MSU wouldn't honor the scholarship offer made by former coach Bobby Williams because he was too short, Woods said his challenge is no bigger than any other college player.

"I wouldn't really say I have something to prove because of my size," he said. "Of course, everybody has something to prove at the next level. I want to prove I'm the best running back. That's what I want to prove."

Woods won't be that far from family either. His dad was raised in St. Louis, which is about two hours from the campus in Columbia, Mo., and still has family members there.

"It provides an opportunity for Marcus to have some sup-

port that's not that far away," Woods Sr. said. "It worked out perfectly. Missouri was the school I followed as a kid coming up."

A lot of guys I grew up with are still there and are excited about having him come, and it provides that added degree of support, too."

Nebraska had been recruiting Woods, but the Cornhuskers told him earlier this month they had received more commitment and had the backs they needed, according to Woods Sr., Oklahoma State had called since receiving the tape of Woods, but the Cowboys also picked up a commitment from a player they had been recruiting all along.

Woods had a visit scheduled with Kansas but canceled that when he decided on Missouri.

Bowling Green and Toledo coaches had visited in the past week, and Kentucky wanted Woods to make a visit there. But those offers were declined, too. "I think Marcus felt so good about the experience there at Missouri," his dad said. "That it's in the backyard of family didn't hurt. He's convinced that's the place he wants to be."

Do you know a Farmington school student who has turned his or her life around?

Students in grades 7 - 12, who have made positive changes in their lives will be honored at a luncheon in Farmington Hills Manor on March 11, 2003.

Students will be judged on the basis of significant improvements in a broad range of areas—from behavior to school work to community service.

The program is sponsored by Farmington Public Schools, Farmington Observer, Farmington Public Safety Department and the Farmington Hills Police Department.

If your company would like to sponsor or donate gifts for this new program of encouragement, call Cathy Young,

734-953-2155 cyoung@oe.homecomm.net



AMERICAN HOUSE REALTY SERVICES. THREE GREAT COMMUNITIES. THREE EXCELLENT LIVING OPTIONS. Open House Sat & Sun 10-4. FREEDOM VILLAS, THE MANOR, CONGREGATE LIVING. TOURS AVAILABLE 7 DAYS A WEEK.

MICHIGAN'S LARGEST SPORTS CARD SHOW. BUY TRADE SELL. JAN. 24-25-26. FRI 12-9 • SAT 10-9 • SUN 10-6. RARE APPEARANCE - WWE SUPERSTAR STONE COLD STEVE AUSTIN. SUNDAY, JANUARY 26TH • 1:00 PM - 3:00 PM \$35.00 ANY ITEM. '84 WORLD SERIES CHAMP DAN PETRY. SATURDAY, JAN. 25TH 1:00 PM - 3:00 PM \$3.00 ANY ITEM. HOCKEY GREAT BOBBY BAUN. SATURDAY, JAN. 25TH 3:00 PM - 5:00 PM \$5.00 ANY ITEM. FREE TRADING CARDS.